

Message Text

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DRAFTED BY EUR/SOV:WHEDGAR:BG

APPROVED BY EUR/SOV:MGARRISON

COMMERCE - MR. PARKER (SUBS)

USIA - MR. JONES (SUBS)

EB/OCA/CM - MR. DAY

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R 170002Z DEC 75

FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ETRD, UR

SUBJECT: PROPOSED "VISIT USA" PROGRAM FOR THE USSR

1. ON BEHALF OF THE WORKING GROUP ON TOURISM OF THE U.S.-USSR TRADE AND ECONOMIC COUNCIL, THE CHAIRMAN OF AMERICAN EXPRESS, HOWARD CLARK, HAS PROPOSED TO THE DEPARTMENT THAT A "VISIT USA" PROGRAM BE ESTABLISHED FOR THE SOVIET UNION.

2. WHILE WE RECOGNIZE THAT THE OPPORTUNITIES FOR EXPANDING SOVIET TOURISM TO THE U.S. ARE SEVERELY LIMITED, WE HAVE AGREED TO DISCUSS THIS IDEA FURTHER WITH AMERICAN EXPRESS AND OTHER REPRESENTATIVES OF THE U.S. TOURISM INDUSTRY AT A MEETING TO BE ORGANIZED EARLY NEXT YEAR. WHILE A "VISIT USA" PROGRAM WOULD BE OF NEGLIGIBLE COMMERCIAL VALUE, IT WOULD AT LEAST BE A USEFUL FORM OF FOLLOWUP TO THE CSCE.

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3. BEFORE HOLDING THIS MEETING, WE WOULD APPRECIATE

EMBASSY'S REACTION TO THIS IDEA. WE UNDERSTAND THAT A
COPY OF CLARK'S LETTER OF OCTOBER 30 TO THE SECRETARY WAS

SENT TO THE AMBASSADOR, ENCLOSING A LIST OF SPECIFIC
PROPOSALS FOR IMPLEMENTING SUCH A PROGRAM. EMBASSY'S
VIEWS ON THESE PROPOSALS WOULD BE PARTICULARLY USEFUL.

4. EMBASSY SHOULD BEAR IN MIND THE FACT THAT THERE IS
LITTLE CHANCE OF GETTING ADDITIONAL FUNDS FOR SUCH A
PROGRAM FROM WASHINGTON IN VIEW OF MARGINAL COMMERCIAL
IMPACT. INGERSOLL

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